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News Release ~ Communiqué

Canada House exhibition opens in Old Montreal

MONTREAL, June 29, 1995 - As part of Canada Day festivities, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, the Honourable Michel Dupuy, in conjunction with sixteen federal government departments and agencies, invites the general public to visit Canada House, which will be open from June 30 to July 9. Located at the Old Port of Montreal, above Expotech and in front of the Imax cinema, Canada House is open every day from noon to 8:00 pm, and admission is free.

Canada House, which had its Canadian inauguration in Victoria in 1994 for the Commonwealth Games, is a unique showcase for Canada's human, cultural, historical, natural, scientific and economic heritage.

Bringing together most of the major federal departments and agencies under the same roof, this offers an opportunity for Canadians to discover Canada's history and some of our great achievements through interactive displays, videos, exhibits, photographs, information material and artifacts, and to learn more about Canadian government activities that affect our daily lives.

The participants are listed below, along with some details of what they will be presenting at Canada House:

Canadian Heritage: Interactive displays on the history of Canada; national parks artifacts and images; an exhibit on national symbols.

Human Resources Development Canada: The public will have access to two computer terminals. At the first, they may consult the National Job Bank and obtain information on the labour market, and at the second they may apply for a job.

Industry Canada: Interactive displays. Representatives from CAE Electronics Ltd, recipient of the "Mercuriade" award for business of the year, will be present.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada: Displays on fisheries, beluga whales and the oceanographic sciences.

Environment Canada: Exhibits on Biosphere and the St. Lawrence River.

National Defence: Display on peacekeeping missions; at the booth there will be soldiers who participated in peacekeeping missions and a vehicle used to transport troops and civilians during these missions.

Health Canada: Displays and videos on the health and welfare of individuals.

Canada Post: Exhibit on the history of postage stamps.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police: Two Mounties in review order dress uniform will be at the stand on June 30 and July 1.

National Film Board: Animated films will be shown, and cinematographic material will be on sale.

Telefilm Canada: Scenes from major Canadian films will be screened.

Canadian Space Agency: Display featuring the main space programs and a model of the Canadarm.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada: Visitors will be invited to explore the universe of citizenship and immigration by venturing inside an electronic game. They can also test their knowledge with a quiz on citizenship and immigration programs.

Veterans Affairs Canada: Exhibit on the "Canada Remembers" program commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Allied victory.

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HISTORY OF CANADA HOUSE

Canada House is an exhibition that showcases Canada's human, natural, historic, cultural, scientific and economic heritage.

It opened its doors for the first time abroad at the Barcelona Olympic Games in 1992. Originally rather modest, Canada House served primarily as a meeting place for the Canadian family abroad - athletes, coaches, Canadian tourists and visiting dignitaries. The experience was repeated two years later during the Lillehammer Olympic Games in 1994.

The Department of Canadian Heritage reviewed the formula for the Commonwealth Games in Victoria in 1994. Since Canada was the host country, a new dimension was added to Canada House in Victoria; it became not only a home for Canadians, but also the symbol of Canada's welcome to visiting tourists and a window on Canada for the world. Canada House thus became a public relations activity for the Department of Canadian Heritage, with the Department's various sectors (Parks, Arts and Culture, Citizenship and Canadian Identity) playing a major role. Other departments and organizations also took part in this project.

The Victoria Canada House was still a meeting place, but this time there were also stands presenting various facets of the Department of Canadian Heritage's mandate and of the Canadian reality. Other federal departments and institutions and the private sector were also involved in this project, specifically, the Government of British Columbia, Aboriginal associations, the Solicitor General of Canada, the RCMP and Kodak.

Victoria demonstrated beyond any doubt that Canada House was a winning formula worth refining and using more often. In this way, the tools developed could be re-used regularly. That is why a Canada House was set up, in February, at the Canada Games in Grande Prairie, Alberta, and then again a few weeks later at the World Nordic Games in Thunder Bay.

The Department of Canadian Heritage is proud to be working with its partners in the federal government to present this exhibition showcasing Canada and for the benefit of Montrealers and visitors to Montreal from around the world.

Canada House also allows the Government of Canada to increase awareness of its activities and gives federal departments greater contact with the people of Quebec.

In short, the unifying theme of this exhibition is still Canadian heritage, a sort of telescope through which the exhibitors can focus on Canada's great achievements, its heroes and builders, its symbols and institutions, its natural beauty, history, diversity and richness. Historical documents, videos, animation, computers, photographs, drawings, paintings and interactive games will all be used to let everyone appreciate the incredible richness of our national heritage.